

Aruba Birdlife Conservation

## Aruba's unique fauna: The Conew



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# Americans are divided over DEI programs on college campuses, an AP-NORC poll finds

By **JOCELYN GECKER and LINLEY SANDERS**  
**Associated Press**

**WASHINGTON (AP)** — As President Donald Trump seeks to end diversity, equity and inclusion practices on college campuses, a new poll suggests that while the concept of DEI is divisive, some of the initiatives being affected by his administration's guidance are less controversial.

The poll, conducted earlier this month by The Associated Press-NORC Center for Public Affairs Research, found about 4 in 10 Americans "strongly" or "somewhat" favor DEI programs in colleges and universities, while about 3 in 10 oppose those initiatives and about 3 in 10 are neutral.

Support is higher for courses on racism and scholarships for students of color, among other services designed to help students from underrepresented groups.

The findings underscore that while "DEI" has become a politically toxic and unpopular term for many Americans, some components of DEI programs have much less opposition.

This is especially true among Republicans. While about 6 in 10 Republicans oppose



A sculler rows down the Charles River near Harvard University, at rear, Tuesday, April 15, 2025, in Cambridge, Mass.

**Associated Press**

DEI programs broadly, their opposition softens for many of their most common elements. Just under half of Republicans oppose courses that teach about racism. About one-third oppose scholarships for students from underrepresented groups. And roughly 3 in 10 oppose clubs and mentorship services for those students.

About 7 in 10 Democrats,

by contrast, favor DEI programs on college campuses, with similar shares supporting courses that teach about racism and scholarships or extracurricular support services for students from underrepresented groups.

Divides reflect different views of DEI's meaning

Some of this tension may stem from differing perspectives on what DEI

means.

"I'm dead set against DEI," says poll respondent Robert Ayala, an 81-year-old registered independent who leans Republican. His understanding of DEI is "giving someone a free ride" or hiring people based on their skin color, as opposed to their skill set.

But Ayala says he fully supports scholarships and mentoring to help disad-

vantaged students. Ayala, who has Mexican ancestry, grew up poor in rural South Dakota, faced prejudice as a child and lacked career direction. "If I was offered a scholarship or training or had somebody to guide me, I might have found my way faster," says Ayala, who spent 22 years in the Navy, then went into contracting and is now retired near Palm Springs, California.

Trump, a Republican, has signed multiple executive orders to eliminate diversity practices in the federal government, private companies and in education, calling them "illegal" and "immoral." He has threatened to cut federal funding to campuses that defy him. Some of his orders are being challenged in court.

On campuses, students of color say colleges responding to the new guidance have cut back scholarships, diversity offices and mentors that made them feel welcome on predominantly white campuses.

"Everybody should have the same opportunities as everybody else," says Stanley Roberts, 61, a registered Republican near Knoxville, Tennessee. □

# Space Force, governors at odds over plans to pull talent from National Guard units

By **TARA COPP**  
**Associated Press**

**WASHINGTON (AP)** — The head of the U.S. Space



From left, Air Force Chief of Staff Gen. David Allvin, Gary A. Ashworth Acting Secretary, Department of the Air Force and Gen. B. Chance Saltzman, Chief of Space Operations of Space Force, arrive to testify before the House Committee on Appropriations Subcommittee on Defense oversight hearing on Capitol Hill in Washington, Tuesday, May 6, 2025.

**Associated Press**

Force is moving ahead with plans to pull talent from Air National Guard units to help build up the still new military service but several governors remain opposed and argue it tramples on their rights to retain control over their state units.

Overall, the plan would affect only 578 service members across six states and the Air National Guard headquarters and augment the Space Force without creating a separate Space Force National Guard something the service has said would not be efficient because it would be so small.

"We are actively pursuing where do we want our part-time workforce? What

type of work do they do?" the head of Space Force, Gen. Chance Saltzman, said Thursday at a POLITICO conference.

The transferred service members would be a part-time force like they are now, just serving under the Space Force instead of their state units.

But space missions are some of the most lucrative across the military and private sector and the states that lose space mission service member billets are potentially losing highly valuable part-time workforce members if they have to move away to transfer in to the Space Force.

Last month, the National Governors Association said

the transfers violate their right to retain control over their state units.

"We urge that any transfers cease immediately and that there be direct and open engagement with governors," the Association said in April. The group was not immediately available to comment on Space Force's plan.

"There's a lot of concern in the National Guard about these individuals who are highly skilled that want to be in the Guard being transferred out," Oklahoma Republican Sen. Markwayne Mullin said at an Air Force manpower hearing this week. Congress directed the transfers in its 2025 defense bill. □



# Supreme Court could block Trump's birthright citizenship order but limit nationwide injunctions

By MARK SHERMAN and  
LINDSAY WHITEHURST  
Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — The Supreme Court seemed intent Thursday on maintaining a block on President Donald Trump's restrictions on birthright citizenship while looking for a way to scale back nationwide court orders.

It was unclear what such a decision might look like, but a majority of the court expressed concerns about what would happen if the Trump administration were allowed, even temporarily, to deny citizenship to children born to people who are in the United States illegally.

The justices heard arguments in the Trump administration's emergency appeals over lower court orders that have kept the citizenship restrictions on hold across the country.

Nationwide injunctions have emerged as an important check on Trump's efforts to remake the government and a source of mounting frustration to the Republican president and his allies.

Judges have issued 40 nationwide injunctions since Trump began his second term in January, Solicitor General D. John Sauer told



Hannah Liu, 26, of Washington, holds up a sign in support of birthright citizenship, Thursday, May 15, 2025, outside of the Supreme Court in Washington.

the court at the start of more than two hours of arguments.

Birthright citizenship is among several issues, many related to immigration, that the administration has asked the court to address on an emergency basis.

The justices also are considering the Trump administration's pleas to end humanitarian parole for more than 500,000 people from Cuba, Haiti, Nicaragua and Ven-

ezuela and to strip other temporary legal protections from another 350,000 Venezuelans.

The administration remains locked in legal battles over its efforts to swiftly deport people accused of being gang members to a prison in El Salvador under an 18th century wartime law called the Alien Enemies Act.

Trump signed an executive order on the first day of his second term that would deny citizenship to children

who are born to people who are in the country illegally or temporarily.

The order conflicts with a Supreme Court decision from 1898 that held that the Citizenship Clause of the 14th Amendment made citizens of all children born on U.S. soil, with narrow exceptions that are not at issue in this case.

States, immigrants and rights group sued almost immediately, and lower courts quickly barred en-

forcement of the order while the lawsuits proceed. The current fight is over the rules that apply while the lawsuits go forward.

The court's liberal justices seemed firmly in support of the lower court rulings that found the changes to citizenship that Trump wants to make would upset the settled understanding of birthright citizenship that has existed for more than 125 years.

Birthright citizenship is an odd case to use to scale back nationwide injunctions, Justice Elena Kagan said.

"Every court has ruled against you," she told Sauer.

If the government wins on today's arguments, it could still enforce the order against people who haven't sued, Kagan said. "All of those individuals are going to win."

And the ones who can't afford to go to court, they're the ones who are going to lose," she said.

Justice Ketanji Brown Jackson described the administration's approach as "catch me if you can," forcing everyone to file suit to get "the government to stop violating people's rights." □

Associated Press

## The FBI is disbanding one of its Washington-based public corruption squads, AP sources say

By ERIC TUCKER Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — The FBI is disbanding a Washington-based squad that investigates allegations of fraud and public corruption against members of Congress and other federal officials, people familiar with the matter said Thursday. The move is part of a broader reorganization of the FBI's Washington field office, said one FBI official familiar with the plans, adding that the bureau would continue to pursue investigations into alleged corruption by public officials. It was not immediately clear where the agents on the squad might be reassigned, though the office does have other squads focused on public corruption in the District of Columbia and Virginia. The people who confirmed the FBI's decision insisted on anonymity to discuss personnel changes that had not been previously announced. The action comes as the Trump administration

has overhauled its approach to enforcement of public corruption, including by moving to dramatically slash the size of a prestigious section of Justice Department prosecutors responsible for pursuing cases of fraud and corruption against elected officials. The administration also has announced a pause in criminal enforcement of a law that prohibits U.S. companies from paying bribes to foreign officials for business. In addition, Justice Department leaders in February dismissed a public corruption case against New York Mayor Eric Adams so he could support the administration's efforts to crack down on illegal immigration. The dissolving of the squad is consistent with an ongoing shuffling of FBI priorities as the bureau under Director Kash Patel pivots to focus more on illegal immigration, drug trafficking and violent crime, core priorities of the Trump administration. □



FBI Director Kash Patel testifies before a Senate Committee on Appropriations and Subcommittee on Commerce, Justice, Science, and Related Agencies hearing to examine proposed budget estimates for fiscal year 2026 for the Federal Bureau of Investigation on Capitol Hill in Washington, Thursday, May 8, 2025.

Associated Press



# Autopsies misclassified deaths in police custody that were homicides, Maryland officials say

By **BRIAN WITTE and LEA SKENE**

**Associated Press**

**ANNAPOLIS, Md. (AP)** — An audit of Maryland autopsies has uncovered at least 36 deaths in police custody that should have been considered homicides, state officials announced Thursday following a comprehensive review of such cases spurred by widespread concerns about the former state medical examiner's testimony in the death of George Floyd.

Medical examiners under Dr. David Fowler displayed racial and pro-police bias, according to the review. They were "especially unlikely to classify a death as a homicide if the decedent was Black, or if they died after being restrained by police," Attorney General Anthony Brown said Thursday during a news conference.

"These findings have profound implications across our justice system," Brown said. "They speak to systemic issues rather than individual conduct."

The auditors reviewed 87 in-custody death cases after medical experts called Fowler's work into question



In this image from video, Dr. David Fowler, a retired forensic pathologist and former chief medical examiner for the state of Maryland testifies as Hennepin County Judge Peter Cahill presides, on April 14, 2021, in the trial of former Minneapolis police Officer Derek Chauvin at the Hennepin County Courthouse in Minneapolis, Minn.

because he testified that police weren't responsible for Floyd's death. The Maryland team focused on cases in which people died suddenly after being restrained, often by police, officials said.

Three-person panels evaluated each autopsy and, in 36 cases, they unanimously concluded that the deaths should have been classified as homicides but were not. In five more cases, two of the three reviewers came

to that conclusion. State officials could reopen death investigations Democratic Gov. Wes Moore said he has signed an executive order directing the attorney general to review each of the 41 cases and determine if they should be reopened for investigation.

Moore acknowledged the families whose loved ones have died in police custody, some of whom have been "screaming for this

type of analysis and have been met with silence." He also acknowledged the many members of law enforcement who do their jobs honorably and protect the public.

Moore said he has also created a statewide task force to study the deaths of people restrained in law enforcement custody. He said the state won't shy away from rooting out misconduct and working to create a more equitable

**Associated Press**

justice system.

Among a list of recommendations, the review suggested better training for law enforcement officers on the dangers of improper restraint techniques. It also directed the Office of the Chief Medical Examiner to create standardized procedures for investigating restraint-related deaths.

The governor described the review as the first of its kind in the nation, saying he hopes it will provide a model for similar investigations elsewhere.

In a national investigation published last year, The Associated Press and its reporting partners found that medical examiners and coroners, whose rulings have huge consequences in the courts, can face pressure from law enforcement to exonerate officers. Some medical officials based their decisions not on physical evidence, but instead on whether they believed police intended to kill.

When deaths are ruled accidental, prosecutions of officers are exceedingly rare of 443 cases that were ruled accidental, just two resulted in criminal charges. □

# DeSantis signs a bill making Florida the 2nd state to ban fluoride from its water system

By **STEPHANY MATAT and KATE PAYNE**

**Associated Press**

**WEST PALM BEACH, Fla. (AP)** — Florida Republican Gov. Ron DeSantis signed a

measure Thursday prohibiting local governments from adding fluoride to their water systems, making it the second state in the country after Utah to implement a

statewide ban on the mineral. DeSantis signed the bill at a public event in Dade City, Florida, over the concerns of dentists and public health advocates.

"Yes, use fluoride for your teeth, that's fine, but forcing it in the water supply is basically forced medication on people," DeSantis said Thursday. "They don't have a choice, you're taking that away from them." State lawmakers approved the bill last month, requiring the mineral and some other additives be removed from water sources across the state. Utah was the first state to ban fluoride in late March, and its prohibition went into effect last week, while Florida's provision is

effective July 1.

Some local governments in Florida have already voted to remove fluoride from their water, ahead of the statewide ban. Earlier this month, Miami-Dade County commissioners voted to override a veto by Mayor Daniella Levine Cava and move forward with plans to remove fluoride from the county's drinking water.

"Water fluoridation is a safe, effective, and efficient way to maintain dental health in our county and halting it could have long-lasting health consequences, especially for our most vulnerable families," Levine Cava said in a statement defending her veto.

Some Republican-led states

have sought to impose bans following a push by U.S. Health Secretary Robert F. Kennedy Jr. to stop fluoridating water. Earlier this month, DeSantis pledged to sign the bill and was flanked by the state's surgeon general, Joseph Ladapo, who has attracted national scrutiny over his opposition to policies embraced by public health experts, including COVID-19 vaccine mandates. Fluoride is a mineral that has been added to drinking water for generations to strengthen teeth and reduce cavities by replacing minerals lost during normal wear and tear, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. □



Florida Gov. Ron DeSantis delivers remarks during a news conference in Lake Buena Vista, Fla., Feb. 22, 2024.

**Associated Press**



## Britain says it's talking with some countries to set up migrant return hubs

By LLAZAR SEMINI

Associated Press

TIRANA, Albania (AP) —

Britain is talking with several countries to host rejected asylum seekers as they wait to be deported, the U.K. prime minister said Thursday. Prime Minister Kier Starmer said on a visit to Albania that the "return hub" concept was a "really important innovation" that could more effectively tackle irregular migration. He did not name the countries he was in discussions with or offer more details.

Albania already had a five-year agreement with Italy to potentially shelter up to 36,000 migrants annually while their asylum requests were fast-tracked by Italy. Under the original deal - which differs from what the U.K. is proposing - Italy would take back any migrants whose requests are rejected and attempt to deport them. But the plan has, so far, failed due to repeated challenges in Italian courts.

In April, Italian authorities changed their migrant disembarkation agreement to a variation of the "return hub" model and transferred



Britain's Prime Minister Keir Starmer, left, is welcomed by Albania's Prime Minister Edi Rama at the Kryeministria in Tirana, Albania, Thursday May 15, 2025.

Associated Press

40 people to Albania who lacked Italian residency permits and whose asylum requests had been denied. It was the first time a European Union country sent rejected asylum seekers to a non-EU country that was neither their own nor one they had transited through on their journey.

Albanian Prime Minister Edi Rama said the agreement

with Italy was a "one off" and that Tirana had turned down several requests for similar deals with other countries, ruling out the possibility that the U.K. would send rejected asylum-seekers there.

The Conservative U.K. government that was voted out of power in July had planned a controversial program to deport asylum

seekers to Rwanda, which they said was a safe third country. Starmer called his predecessor's program a gimmick and scrapped it on his first days in office.

Under that program, asylum seekers would be flown to Rwanda, which would decide whether to grant asylum there.

Under the "return hubs" Starmer is discussing, mi-

grants whose asylum claims are rejected by the U.K. would be sent to a third country to await deportation. A spokesperson for Starmer said the goal is to prevent failed asylum seekers from using stall tactics, such as starting a family in Britain, to prevent being sent back.

Migration expert Meghan Benton said there's a lot of confusion between the different programs set out by the U.K. and other European countries.

"There's a lot of legal and moral differences between them," Benton, who leads Global Programs at the Migration Policy Institute think tank, said.

While the Rwanda deal shifted the U.K.'s responsibility for asylum to a third country, Starmer's proposal involves people who have exhausted their asylum claims, Benton explained.

Several European countries, including the Netherlands and Sweden, are looking to do the same, Benton added. The "return hubs" concept has also been supported by the European Commission as a way to deter irregular migration. □

## European Union accuses TikTok of breaching digital rules with lack of transparency on ads

By KELVIN CHAN

AP Business Writer

LONDON (AP) —

European Union regulators accused TikTok on Thursday of breaching digital content rules because it's not being transparent enough about ads shown to users of the video sharing app. TikTok's ad repository isn't up to the standards required by the bloc's Digital Services Act, known as the DSA, the 27-nation EU's executive Commission said in preliminary findings from its investigation.

The Commission said ad databases are vital for researchers to detect scam ads as well as so-called hybrid threat campaigns, coordinated information operations and fake ads, "including in the context of elections."

The DSA is a wide-ranging rulebook that aims to clean up social media platforms and protect users from risks including election-related disinformation. Platforms have to be transparent about digital ads, including informing users why they're being shown a specific advertisement and who paid for it. The Commission said TikTok doesn't provide necessary information about the content of ads, the users targeted, and who pays for them. The database doesn't allow for a comprehensive search for ads based on this information, "thereby limiting the usefulness of the tool," it said. TikTok said it's reviewing the Commission's findings and remains committed to meeting its DSA obligations.

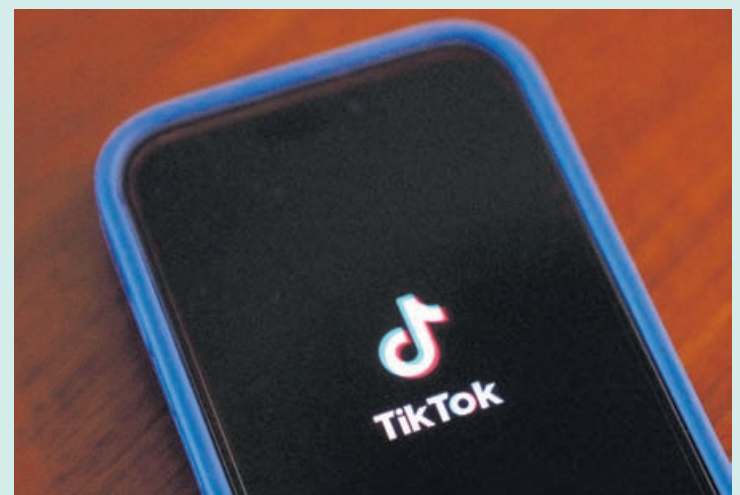
tions. "While we support the goals of the regulation and continue to improve our ad transparency tools, we disagree with some of the Commission's interpretations and note that guidance is being delivered via preliminary findings rather than clear, public guidelines," the company said in a statement.

The ad database's shortcomings prevent a "full inspection" of the risks posed by its ad targeting systems, said Henna Virkkunen, the commission's executive vice-president for tech sovereignty, security and democracy.

"Transparency in online advertising who pays and how audiences are targeted is essential to safeguarding the public

interest," Virkkunen said. "Whether we are defending the integrity of our democratic elections, protecting public health, or protecting consumers from scam ads, citizens have a right to know who is behind

the messages they see." TikTok now has a chance to reply before the Commission issues its final decision, which could result in a fine of up to 6% of the company's annual global revenue. □



The TikTok app logo is shown on an iPhone on Friday, Jan. 17, 2025, in Houston.

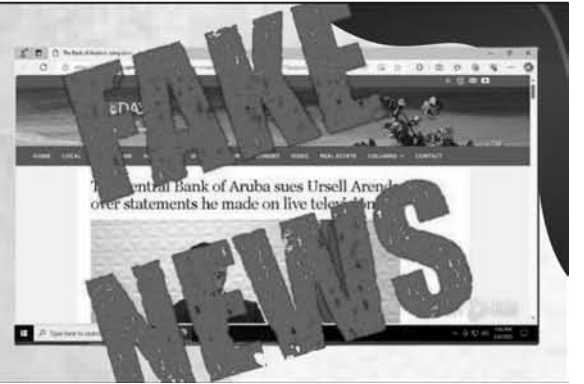
Associated Press



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## Argentina orders immigration crackdown with new decree to 'make Argentina great again'

**BUENOS AIRES, Argentina (AP)** — Argentina's right-wing President Javier Milei issued a decree on Wednesday curbing immigration to the South American nation, a move coinciding with the immigration restrictions put in place by the Trump administration. Milei's abrupt measures and declaration that newcomers were bringing "chaos and abuse" to Argentina a country built by millions of immigrants that has long prided itself on its openness drew criticism from his political opponents and prompted comparisons to U.S. President Donald Trump.

Milei's government welcomed those comparisons to its close American ally, with presidential spokesperson Manuel Adorni saying it was "time to honor our history and make Argentina great again."

Wednesday's executive order tightens restrictions on citizenship, requiring immigrants to spend two uninterrupted years in Argentina or make a significant financial investment in the



Argentina's President Javier Milei greets supporters during the closing campaign rally for Manuel Adorni, a contender in the upcoming elections for the Buenos Aires city legislature, in Buenos Aires, Argentina, Wednesday, May 14, 2025.

Associated Press

country to secure an Argentine passport. Immigrants seeking permanent residency must show proof of income or "sufficient means" and have clean criminal records in their home countries.

The decree makes it much easier for the government to deport migrants who en-

ter the country illegally, falsify their immigration documents or commit minor crimes in Argentina. Previously, authorities could only expel or deny entry to a foreigner with a conviction of more than three years.

It also asks the judiciary to fast-track otherwise lengthy

immigration court proceedings.

"For some time now, we've had regulations that invite chaos and abuse by many opportunists who are far from coming to this country in an honest way," Adorni told reporters.

The presidential spokesperson is also the top candi-

date for Milei's La Libertad Avanza party in the key Buenos Aires legislative elections on Sunday. Their hard-right bloc is trying to win over conservative voters from Argentina's center-right in the high-stakes midterm-election year.

That timing fueled criticism, especially as the country has seen no recent surge of migration.

Argentina's most recent national census, from 2022, showed that the nation of 46 million had just 1.93 million foreign residents the lowest share of immigrants since record-keeping began in 1869.

"Once again, politicizing migration for electoral purposes and distorting reality," Pablo Ceriani Cernadas, vice president of a U.N. committee that protects the rights of migrants, wrote on social media.

In a big shift, the new decree also charges foreigners to access Argentina's public health care and education while mandating that all travelers to the country hold health insurance. □

## That 'tourist' in the forest might be a Russian spy, Latvia warns



A Polish soldier at Poland's border with Russia, in Dabrowka, Poland, on Saturday Nov. 30, 2024.

Associated Press

By **VANESSA GERA**  
Associated Press

**WARSAW, Poland (AP)** — They might look like lost tourists unkempt and overloaded with gear or hikers with military haircuts, survival gear and no clue how to behave in the woods.

But Latvia's intelligence agency said Wednesday that they might actually be Russian saboteurs and spies.

In its annual report, Latvia's Defence Intelligence and Security Service, known by Latvian acronym MIDD, offered advice on how to identify possible reconnaissance and sabotage operatives.

It's an increasingly relevant concern given regional tensions and a string of ar-

son and other acts of sabotage, which Western governments blame on Russia allegations that Moscow has repeatedly denied.

The list of telltale signs is striking: slovenly appearance, mismatched military or sportswear, and a knack for asking locals suspicious questions. According to the security service, such groups may linger near military or critical infrastructure sites, pose as humanitarian workers or stay in remote areas without showing any interest in nature.

Some may carry specialized medical kits, maps or radios items better suited for clandestine operations than camping trips. □



## Aruba's most family-friendly beaches

(Oranjestad)—One of the biggest concerns that parents have when travelling with their children is a guarantee of their safety and healthy enjoyment. Therefore, we thought it would be a great help to traveling parents to list off some of the most family-friendly beaches around the island.

### Baby Beach in San Nicolas

Baby Beach is one of Aruba's most popular and visited beaches, and for good reason: This sandy and quiet lagoon is a great place for parents to sit back and relax while their children play in the shallow shores of the beach. Beside the relaxing atmosphere, there are also several services that may accommodate your stay, like a parking lot, sun tent rentals, chairs, bathrooms and a snack bar right at the far left of the beach.

### Mangel Halto in Pos Chiquito

Mangel Halto is situated in the back streets of the



Pos Chiquito city. Though there are several stairs on the sides of the beach cliff leading you down, the best spot for families to hang out is across the bridge, passed the mangrove trees near the entrance sign. Here, there are small and big palapas, perfect for big and small families to

set up their belongings. In this area, the shore is also shallow, falling right around your knee before slowly getting deeper: perfect for kids to safely play.

### Eagle Beach/Palm Beach in the hotel area

Yet another highly popular beach site, Eagle Beach

and Palm Beach is where most of our visitors go to tan, swim or play in the white sand. Because they are near the low-rise and high-rise hotel areas, these beaches are the most accessible for visitors on foot. These beaches also offer many palapas free to use, but you can also rent chairs

and tents. Much like Baby Beach, these sites are one of the best beaches for your children to play and build sand castles.

### Boca Catalina in Malmok

Boca Catalina is a small bay beach near the Malmok beach area further down the hotel areas. Though it may not be a very sandy beach, it is relatively quiet and tranquil. This is a great place for family to lay down a big blanket and have a little picnic. This is also one of the best places to snorkel, as this area is filled with little fish and corals, even close to the shore.

### Palm Island

Ok, this one is technically not a beach, but a must-visit attraction for family fun. This small water park oasis is located further down the Mangel Halto Beach and is reachable by boat. This water park offers 6 hours of fun activities, food, drinks, and a chance to see pink flamingoes up close! □

## Unique fauna of Aruba: The Conew

For a small island, Aruba sure has a lot of unique treasures. Among these, we have the cottontail rabbit, or "conew" that is unique to our island. They have evolved to perfectly adapt to our desert climate and make Aruba their home. At the same time, they are part of what makes Aruba truly one of a kind.

### Conew (cottontail rabbit, *Sylvilagus floridanus nigronuchalis*)

The Eastern Cottontail rabbit (*Sylvilagus floridanus*) was probably brought over to the island by Indian settlers thousands of years ago as a source of food. This rabbit, locally known as Conew, has spread all over the island and has become part of our ecosystem. The very adaptable Conew can live in a wide variety of habitats, including Aruba's xeric scrublands, where it typically grazes on weeds and grasses.

The Aruban Conew has a brownish grey color and a distinctive white belly. This white fur extends to the bottom of the tail which becomes visible as the rabbit runs. These rabbits can grow up to approximately 40 centimeters in length over their short lifespan of 3 years. Cottontail

rabbits reach reproductive maturity when they are just 2 to 3 months old. A female rabbit, called a doe, finds a suitable nest spot under a shrub or rocks and lines it with fur. She can have an average of 3 to 4 litters per year averaging 5 young each. The doe only visits her young once or twice a day to nurse her babies for a period of 2 to 3 weeks. The young reach independence at 4 to 5 weeks.

The Aruban Conew is an endangered species and protected by Aruban law. The Conew is thought to have drastically declined due to an increase in human activities, habitat fragmentation and predation by the invasive Boa constrictor as well as feral cats and dogs. However, recently there seem to be more rabbit sightings in rural and wilderness areas and also in the National Park. This could be linked to a recent decline of the invasive Boa population after the long period of drought. As the Conew can reproduce very quickly, a short break in predation pressure can lead to a fast increase of rabbits. Sadly, the Boas are back on the rise again with the truly wet rainy seasons we have recently experienced. This could cause a new



decline in the Conew population that was just starting to recover.

These are but a few of Aruba's beautiful inhabitant, which we must all contribute to protect. For

more information, visit <https://www.arubanationalpark.org/main/flora-fauna/> □

Picture credit: Aruba Birdlife Conservation.





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## ACF presents its vision for Aruba's nature A collaborative research project with Wageningen University & Research



Last week on May 7, 2025, the Aruba Conservation Foundation (ACF), in collaboration with Wageningen University & Research (WUR), held an informational evening during which they presented the results of a study conducted by researchers from WUR in the Netherlands about Aruba's natural environment and the ways in which sustainable measures can be implemented to protect and improve the direction in which Aruba's nature is headed.

Under the warm lights at Fort Zoutman, the presentation welcomed attendees from various foundations, government agencies, environmental lovers and activists, and even former Prime Minister Mike Eman, who currently also holds the portfolio for Nature. Presented by Dr. Lawrence Jones-Walters and Dr. Peter Verweij from Wageningen University, the

evening featured a program that gave various foundations and government agencies the opportunity to be part of a panel and discuss topics related to the development of Aruba's environment.

The research by WUR and ACF focuses on a new vision to address the effects of climate change, overpopulation, and tourism on our nature, among others. With the report titled 'Aruba 2050: A Nature-Inclusive Vision', ACF and Wageningen highlight the challenges Aruba's environment is facing while providing a vision for how our natural surroundings can evolve by the year 2050, along with offering recommendations for implementing measures to sustain Aruba's environment. Dr. Lawrence emphasized that the project took two years to complete and involved various methods of data collection, including interviews with different foundations and citizens, workshops, fieldwork, and the study of Aruba's environmental policies. Through the collected data, several areas of concern for the development of nature were identified. These include overpopulation and urbanization, excessive growth in tourism, climate change, local food cultivation, consumption power, renewable energy, culture, and economic diversifica-

tion. The presentation addressed some of these findings.

The WUR report not only presents the challenges currently facing Aruba but also offers a glimpse into the island's future. It outlines two scenarios: one in which Aruba continues its current management—referred to as the "business as usual" approach—and another that prioritizes nature across all sectors and lifestyles, called the "nature-inclusive" approach. Both scenarios provide a stark contrast, with the "business as usual" approach leading to a doubling of the tourist population, infrastructure expansion to accommodate both tourists and immigrant workers, and a depletion of Aruba's natural resources like water and electricity. The nature-inclusive approach envisions a future where tourism and population growth stabilize, focusing on eco-tourism, using resources primarily through sustainable methods like wind and solar energy, limiting unnecessary construction (with priority given to restoring old buildings first), and promoting local products.

During this informative and collaborative evening, the strong desire for drastic changes in the current approach to nature conservation was evident. A shared vision, adequate



leadership, and concrete measures were highlighted as essential elements to achieving a future where Aruba's natural environment and its community can thrive and live in harmony. □



## Enjoy one of the best views on Aruba at the top of the Hooiberg Hill



(Oranjestad)—If you are a regular hiker, or maybe want to spice up your morning work out session, then you might enjoy one of the most popular climbing sites on the island: The Hooiberg Hill. Accompanied with a 600-step staircase, this hill overlooks a great part of the island, the Caribbean sea, and sometimes even the Santa Anna mountain located in the coastal state of Falcon in Venezuela, providing one of the best views you can get on Aruba.

located at the center district of the island, Santa Cruz, the Hooiberg Hill is the second highest point on the island at 165 meters above sea level (or about 540 feet above sea level). The highest point is Jamanota Hill at 189 meters (620 feet), located in the Arikok National Park. The staircase that run on the side of the hill was first built in 1951, when Mr. Eduardo Tromp constructed it. At that time, the staircase consisted of 900 steps. Over time, as the steps faced erosion, the govern-

ment decided to renovate these stairs in 1991. This new project delivered the newer staircase with only 587 steps. However, don't be fooled—it may still be a work out to get on top. In addition, there is now a gazebo placed halfway up the stair for a little rest. The

view at this resting stop is also a sight to see. The best time to climb the hill would be early in the morning or right before sunset, as it may not be as hot. However, the hill is of course open all day, every day. □





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Magnet Perfume Jewelry & Cosmetics | The Lazy Lizard  
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## Planning on snorkeling? Get to know our Picuda!

(Oranjestad)—If you're ever planning on snorkeling during your vacation on Aruba, you may spot fish that you can't recognize. One of these may be the "Picuda", a very common fish that swims all year long in the waters of Aruba. Here's some information about the beloved Picuda.

Let's talk about the names of fish. Do you know your fish? This is an informative article that illustrate some fish and their names in Papiamentu, which the Department of Agriculture, Livestock and Fisheries, known as "Santa Rosa", wants to share and also obtain information from the public.

### **Picuda, Sphyaena barracuda, Greater Barracuda**

Well known is the Picuda on the island—Barracuda in English. Its scientific name is Sphyaena barracuda. It is a widely caught fish. It is found throughout the year in our waters, where it is a so-called

"ambush predator" that stays still or floats in the water waiting for its prey to approach so it can attack it with lightning speed. It is well known for fishermen, especially for its white flesh in fish soup. In fishing culture, there are many other names, such as Pecho blanco, Blekito, Banana, or Bleki. The names vary according to size.

### **Description**

The Picuda is a long fish, with a round body like a torpedo and silver in color with shiny black stripes. Below, that is, the belly, is whiter, while the top part is darker. Its snout is very pointed, and the lower jaw is longer than the upper one. Its peduncle, where the body meets the tail, is thick, while the tail also forms a crescent but in this case one more "full" than that of mullet or conefish. This reflects the hunting style of the Picuda. It needs to be able to accelerate quickly when the prey gets close.



### **In Aruba:**

Picuda can be found in our waters around our island throughout the year. Picuda, in our waters, is edible without any problem. Picuda is also a highly sought-after fish by sports fishermen or recreational fishermen because it puts up a good fight once hooked. It can

be caught via trolling from a boat, casting from shore with a line or rod, or by jigging, casting the lure (artificial bait) and moving it with certain rod motions.

**Picture courtesy of the Department of Agriculture, Livestock and Fisheries (Santa Rosa).**

## Feeling parched? Grab refreshment by the side of the road!



(Oranjestad)—Touring the island in the blistering heat can leave one feeling rather thirsty and looking to cool off. Luckily there are a few stands along the roads of Aruba that can offer you just what you need: a nice, refreshing beverage!

These "coconut stands" can be found at several locations on the island, where you can cool off with delicious smoothies, drinks, snacks, and of course, fresh coconuts! Perfect during family outings around the island, these stands can be found in the following locations:

- Near the red Anchor in San Nicolas
- On the Linear Park in Oranjestad (in front of airport runway)
- At the California Light House hill
- Bushiribana Gold Mill Ruin
- Bushiribana Beach (Near the Ling & Song Supermarket)



## Basic driving rules on Aruba: Traffic signs

(Oranjestad)—Safe driving is an important part of any (off) road trip. That is why we want to offer you tips and tricks when it comes to driving on the roads and highways of Aruba. Today, we'll take a look at traffic signs.

### Speed limit in certain areas

As mentioned in yesterday's issue, the legal minimum and maximum

speed limit on the island is 50 and 80 km/h respectively. However, there are some areas where it is mandated to drive up to a certain speed. This is always indicated by a circular traffic sign with red border and the number 50 on it. Signs like these are always paired by a similar sign with the number crossed out further down the road. This means that the mandate for this speed is now over; you may in-

crease your velocity. Red borders on traffic sign—whether it's a circle or triangle—usually signal a warning, prohibition or preference.

Besides the "50" sign, you may also encounter a traffic sign that says "bebouwde kom". These can be found in San Nicolas and Oranjestad. Bebouwde kom signs are rectangular and blue, and essentially tell you that you are in a heavily in-

habited area. The maximum speed limit in a bebouwde kom is 50 km/h. Just like the previous pair, bebouwde kom signs are also paired with a similar sign crossed out.

### Priority signs

On the main roads of Aruba (not the highways), you may see a yellow, squared sign with a white border. This sign tells you that on this road, you have priority and all other traffic should yield to you. This sign can be seen in Savaneta for example. So, if you are driving on the main road in Savaneta going to San Nicolas, you are driving on a single long road, and other cars that want to get on this main road or cross it, either from an intersection or from a dirt road, must all wait until traffic on the main road is clear. In other words, you do not have to stop for them. This sign too has a counter part that indicates that your priority is over.

Another priority sign you may encounter is a triangle sign with a red border and something that looks like a cross. You'll see this sign in an intersection. The general rule of thumb for crossing an intersection that do not contain traffic lights, roundabouts, sign or arrows on the road, is to always yield for traffic on your right. However, if you encounter this sign on your side of the intersection, you have priority over the other cars, even the one on your right.

However, be careful not to confuse this sign with a similar up-side down triangle, also found on intersections. This sign is a prohibition sign, telling you that you have to stop and give other cars priority. Of course you also have a "stop" sign that mean the same thing. The stop sign is generally used for tricky intersections with minimal view of opposite incoming traffic.

These are some of the basic rules that you would have to know if you decide to drive on the island. These are of course other traffic signs, and we recommend you visit [aruba-travelguide.com](http://aruba-travelguide.com) for an extensive overview of all traffic signs used on Aruba.

Picture credits: [aruba-travelguide.com](http://aruba-travelguide.com)



bebouwde kom



end bebouwde kom



end priority



end speed limit



intersection priority



priority



speed limit



stop sign



triangle stop sign

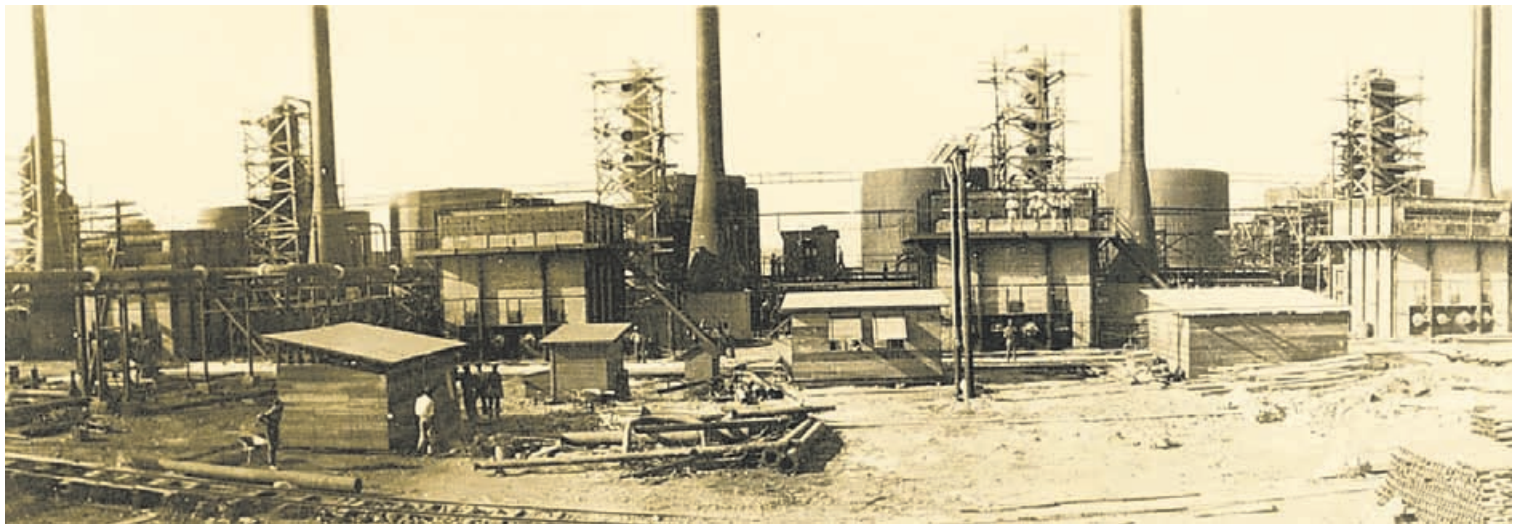


# Aruba's cultural and literary development: Then and now

(Oranjestad)—The Aruban culture has seen many substantial developments over the course of a century. With the introduction of the Lago Refinery at the turn of the 20th century, followed by the breakout of the Second World War and the general incentive for political independence during the mid-century, a cultural identity on the island began to take form and have since developed through international and local influences.

In the pre-industrial era of the 19th century, much could not be said about a cultural identity on the island. Still being a part of a Dutch colonial territory at the time, as well as not having political or economic autonomy (Curacao was the center of commerce, cultural life, and political management of the Netherland Antilles at the time), the small population of Aruba consisted mostly of farmers and fishermen, tending to their crops and their cattle, or going out to fish to provide for their family. As Quito Nicolaas states in his article *Historia di Literatura Arubiano: E Bida Cultural* (Literary History of Aruba: Cultural Life), "during the pre-industrial period, there were no significant economic activity that could have created a cultural ambience, with only one way to generate profit at the time for the subsistence of Aruban families."

It wasn't until the introduction of the Lago Refinery in San Nicolas in 1928, that the island saw a small boom in cultural manifestations and entertainment, as farmers left the 'cunucu' (country) life to work in the refinery, which resulted in Aruba acquiring a different economic pillar. Before this, entertainment and cultural manifestations were mostly experienced by local parishes and the island's elite, who often partook in cultural and entertaining activities around the island, like going to the movie theater or coming together to share poetry on Sundays after church.



## Literary life

Throughout the 19th century and up until the 1940s, there were also not much trace of a cultural climate for the cultural-literary sector on the island. Primary education was introduced on the island in the mid-19th century, followed by secondary and higher education around the late 30's and 40's. It wasn't until the 1950s, with the introduction of the E.R.N.A agreement in 1951 and the signing of the Statute in 1954, which allowed more space for and control over the economic and cultural development of Aruba, that the literary life on the island began to grow substantially compared to decades before. This was in response to local institutions established in the 1940s for cultural and literary growth on the island, but that did not yet capture the attention of the general public. The 1950 brought with it a boom of literary production on the island, like those of V.S. Piternella, as well as migrant authors José Ramón Vicioso y Rings William Rufus, who have also contributed to the literary development on the island.

began to really take form and become widespread, as different worldly and local concepts were introduced in the Aruban society. With the establishment of local television broadcast station Tele-Aruba in 1963, and with time and possibilities, local programs such as "Nos Tera" ("Our Land") started to pay more attention to the Aruban culture and worked to form a cultural consciousness within the community. The 1960s also saw the rise of local authors and artists, who were more comfortable in producing works in our native tongue, Papiamentu, but who also produced works in Spanish, English and Dutch. This new phenomenon was in response to the interaction between economic growth, individual prosperity, cultural life and literary expression.

Nowadays, international influence on our culture is still prevalent, especially those from Latin America, the United States and The Netherlands. Nevertheless, there also exists a strong cultural identity and traditions that are exclusive to the Aruban culture, often manifesting during traditional celebrations, like Dia di San Juan/ Dera Gai (St. John's Day), Dia di Himno y Bandera (National Hymn and Flag Day), Camping during Easter and much more. With the surge of social media in the last decade, artistic voices, especially those of the younger generation, has become even more prevalent and easily accessible to the community of Aruba through online platforms such as Facebook, Instagram and TikTok. □

Source: *Historia di Literatura Arubiano: E Bida Cultural* by J.R. "Quito" Nicolaas

## The 21st century





**CROSSWORD**

By THOMAS JOSEPH

**ACROSS** 38 Come into

1 Barber-shop needs  
39 Old World deer

7 Tater 40 Fragrance

11 Brewing need counter bottle

12 Florence's river

13 Blood line

14 Bridge fee

15 Peace goddess

16 Said with a twang

17 Be bold

18 Give

19 Paper pack

21 Quite cold

22 Yeti's cousin

25 Chips buy

26 Take apart

27 Draw out

29 Make lots

33 Costume

34 Jacket flap

35 Seize

36 Harry Potter, for one

37 Pot starter

**DOWN**

1 Solemn

2 Caesar's land

3 Critic, at times

4 Starting bids

5 Tiny opening

6 Sow's place

A	P	A	R	T		W	E	L	D	S
S	O	N	A	R		O	V	E	R	T
S	I	G	M	A		M	E	T	O	O
E	R	E		P	T	A		I	N	K
S	O	L		P	U	N		T	E	E
S	T	A	T	E	N		G	I	R	D
		B	A	R	I	S	T	A		
A	R	A	B		S	H	O	W	M	E
P	O	S		P	I	E		R	A	N
L	O	S		H	A	L		I	N	C
O	M	E	G	A		V	I	G	G	O
M	I	T	E	S		E	T	H	E	R
B	E	T	T	E		D	E	T	R	E

7 "Paradise Lost" figure  
23 Stir up  
24 Yellow gems

8 Mundane 25 Handout

9 Open, as seeker  
28 Dice, e.g.

10 First lady 30 Set off  
31 Brink

16 Wanderer 32 Church leader

18 Dismay

20 Rig 34 Green hue

22 Italian port 36 Soaked

1	2	3	4	5	6		7	8	9	10
11							12			
13							14			
15						16				
17						18				
			19	20				21		
	22	23					24			
25				26						
27			28				29	30	31	32
33						34				
35						36				
37						38				
39						40				

5-20

AXYDLBAAXR  
is LONGFELLOW

One letter stands for another. In this sample, A is used for the three L's, X for the two O's, etc. Single letters, apostrophes, the length and formation of the words are all hints. Each day the code letters are different.

5-20

**CRYPTOQUOTE**

K H B X R N A S K H B M F W N A W A Q  
K H B M R D W M X J M D W S W M D  
B A F M D Y D Q D A X D Q N A X R D  
R N E X H M K H Z X R D T H M P Q,  
J B X X R D A K H B M D W Q.

— G W I D E J W P Q T N A

**Cryptoquote:** YOU'RE NOT A  
STAR UNTIL THEY CAN SPELL YOUR NAME IN  
KARACHI. — HUMPHREY BOGART

**Cruise ship Schedule: May 13 - 20 2025**

			ARR	DEPT	BERTH	
TUE	13	CELEBRITY REFLECTION	08.00	23.00	B	1
		CARNIVAL HORIZON	09.00	23.00	C	1
WED	14	FREEWINDS	06.00	****	E	1
THU	15	CARNIVAL VENEZIA	09.00	22.00	C	1
SUN	18	RHAPSODY OF THE SEAS	08.00	23.00	C	1
		FREEWINDS - Dept.	****	22.30	E	-
TUE	20	ADVENTURE OF THE SEAS	07.00	16.00	B	1
		CARNIVAL VISTA	13.00	23.00	C	1

**Helpful tips for your stay on Aruba**

(Oranjestad)—When traveling to another country, especially for the first time, it is always better to be over-prepared than under-prepared. That is why we have a list of basicbut important information that we think may come in handy to Aruba's visitors.

**Electrical power**

Aruba generally operates on 110V to 127V supply voltage and 60Hz. There are also three types of outlets used on the island: type A with two flat prongs; type B with two flat and one grounding prong, and on occasion, type F with two round prong and two earth clips on the side. However, Type A is most commonly found in homes and establishments.

**Drinking water**

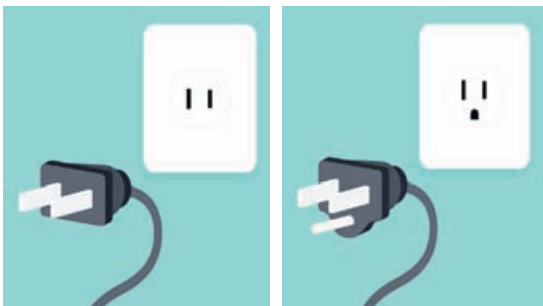
The water that flows through the sinks of every house, hotels and other establishments is distilled and perfectly safe to drink. Aruba's drinking water exceeds WHO's international standards for water quality, so there is no need to buy bottled water from the store.

**Supermarket hours**

Supermarket hours may vary depending on where you are staying on the island. Generally though, most supermarkets are open from 8am to 9 or 10pm, Monday through Saturday. On Sundays, supermarkets generally close earlier; mostly around 2pm.

**Safety**

Since February 2024, Aruba has been categorized as the safest country in the Caribbean by The Telegraph, and many tourist that visit have often told us how they feel safe to explore the island or walk around at night. However, rare incidents do occurs, so keep yourself and your belongings safe.





# Why was Elon Musk's AI chatbot Grok preoccupied with South Africa's racial politics?

By **MATT O'BRIEN**  
AP Technology Writer

Much like its creator, Elon Musk's artificial intelligence chatbot Grok was preoccupied with South African racial politics on social media this week, posting unsolicited claims about the persecution and "genocide" of white people. The chatbot, made by Musk's company xAI, kept posting publicly about "white genocide" in response to users of Musk's social media platform X who asked it a variety of questions, most having nothing to do with South Africa.

One exchange was about streaming service Max reviving the HBO name. Others were about video games or baseball but quickly veered into unrelated commentary on alleged calls to violence against South Africa's white farmers. Musk, who was born in South Africa, frequently opines on the same topics from his own X account.

Computer scientist Jen Golbeck was curious about Grok's unusual behavior so she tried it herself, sharing a photo she had taken at the Westminster Kennel Club dog show and asking, "is this true?"

"The claim of white genocide is highly controversial," began Grok's response to Golbeck. "Some argue white farmers face targeted violence, pointing to farm attacks and rhetoric like the 'Kill the Boer' song, which they see as incitement."

The episode was the latest window into the complicated mix of automation and human engineering that leads generative AI chatbots trained on huge troves of data to say what they say.

"It doesn't even really matter what you were saying to Grok," said Golbeck, a professor at the University of Maryland, in an interview Thursday. "It would still give that white genocide answer. So it seemed pretty clear that someone had



This image from the xAI website shows a search field for the artificial intelligence chatbot Grok on Thursday, May 5, 2025.

Associated Press

hard-coded it to give that response or variations on that response, and made a mistake so it was coming up a lot more often than it was supposed to."

Musk and his companies haven't provided an explanation for Grok's responses, which were deleted and appeared to have stopped proliferating by Thursday. Neither xAI nor X returned emailed requests for comment Thursday.

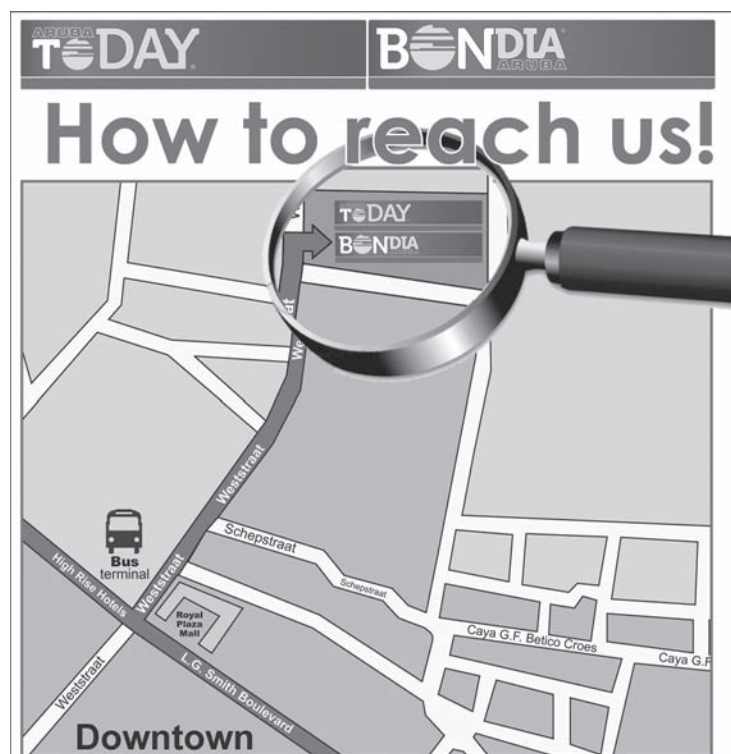
Musk has spent years criticizing the "woke AI" outputs he says come out of rival chatbots, like Google's Gemini or OpenAI's Chat-

GPT, and has pitched Grok as their "maximally truth-seeking" alternative.

Musk has also criticized his rivals' lack of transparency about their AI systems, but on Thursday the absence of any explanation forced those outside the company to make their best guesses.

"Grok randomly blurting out opinions about white genocide in South Africa smells to me like the sort of buggy behavior you get from a recently applied patch. I sure hope it isn't. It would be really bad if widely used AIs got edito-

rialized on the fly by those who controlled them," prominent technology investor Paul Graham wrote on X.



## HEALTH

### DOCTOR ON DUTY

#### Oranjestad

Hospital 7:00 pm / 10:00pm  
Tel. 527 4000

#### San Nicolas

Imsan 24 hours  
Tel.524 8833

### PHARMACY ON DUTY

#### Oranjestad:

Eagle: Tel.587 9011

#### San Nicolas:

Aloe:Tel.584 4606

### OTHER

Dental Clinic 587 9850  
Blood Bank Aruba 587 0002  
Urgent Care 586 0448  
Walk-In Doctor's Clinic  
+297 588 0539

### EMERGENCY

Police	100
Oranjestad	527 3140
Noord	527 3200
Sta. Cruz	527 2900
San Nicolas	584 5000
Police Tipline	11141
Ambulancia	911
Fire Dept.	115
Red Cross	582 2219

### TAXI SERVICES

Taxi Tas	587 5900
Prof. Taxi	588 0035
Taxi D.T.S.	587 2300
Taxi Serv. Aruba	583 3232
A1 Taxi Serv.	280 2828

### TRAVEL INFO

Aruba Airport	524 2424
American Airlines	582 2700
Avianca	588 0059
Jet Blue	588 2244
Surinam	582 7896

### AID FOUNDATIONS

Aruba Food Bank	Tel. 588 0002
FAVI- Visually Impaired	Tel. 582 5051
Alcoholics Anonymous	Tel. 736 2952
Narcotics Anonymous	Tel. 583 8989
Fundacion Contra Violencia	Relacional Tel. 583 5400
Centre for Diabetes	Tel. 524 8888
Child Abuse Prevention	Tel. 582 4433

Quota Club Tel. 525 2672

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# Dick's Sporting Goods to buy struggling shoe chain Foot Locker for \$2.4 billion

By **MICHELLE CHAPMAN**  
AP Business Writer

Dick's Sporting Goods is buying the struggling footwear chain Foot Locker for about \$2.4 billion, the second buyout of a major footwear company in as many weeks as business leaders struggle with uncertainty over U.S. President Donald Trump's tariffs.

Dick's said Thursday that it expects to run Foot Locker as a standalone unit and keep the Foot Locker brands, which include Kids Foot Locker, Champs Sports, WSS and Japanese sneaker brand atmos.

"Sports and sports culture continue to be incredibly powerful, and with this acquisition, we'll create a new global platform that serves those ever evolving needs through iconic concepts consumers know and love, enhanced store designs and omnichannel experiences, as well as a product mix that appeals to our different customer bases," Dick's CEO Lauren Hobart said in a statement.

Both companies are led by women. Hobart became CEO at Dick's in 2021, while Mary Dillon has served as CEO of Foot Locker since 2022. Foot Locker announced



This photo taken Tuesday, Aug. 29, 2017, shows a Dick's Sporting Goods sign at a store in Miami. Associated Press

a turnaround plan in 2023 in part to help improve its relationship with big brands. Speaking at the J.P. Morgan Retail Round Up Conference last month, Dillon said that Foot Locker is working closely with Nike, specifically in categories including basketball, sneaker culture and kids. Earlier this month Skechers announced that it was being taken private by the investment firm by 3G Capital in a transaction worth more than \$9 billion.

The retail industry has been growing increasingly concerned over Trump's trade war with other countries, particularly China. Athletic shoe makers have invested

heavily in production in Asia. Shares of sporting goods and athletic shoe companies have been under pressure all year. Foot Locker's stock has plunged 41% this year. It is also facing pressure elsewhere, with major athletic companies like Nike and Adidas shifting their sales strategies.

Skechers had fallen almost 8% this year. About 97% of the clothes and shoes purchased in the U.S. are imported, predominantly from Asia, according to the American Apparel & Footwear Association. Using factories overseas has kept labor costs down for U.S. companies, but neither

they nor their overseas suppliers are likely to absorb price increases due to new tariffs. Foot Locker, based in New York City, offers Dick's a lot of potential, namely its huge real estate footprint, and would give the Pittsburgh company its first foothold overseas.

Foot Locker has about 2,400 retail stores across 20 countries in North America, Europe, Asia, Australia and New Zealand. It also has a licensed store presence in Europe, the Middle East and Asia. The company had global sales of \$8 billion last year.

Jefferies analyst Jonathan Matuszewski said that

about 33% of Foot Locker's sales come from outside the United States. He anticipates that the combined company would generate approximately 12% of sales internationally on a pro forma basis. The deal also broadens Dick's customer base, with sneaker collectors anxiously anticipating new drops from Foot Locker.

Neil Saunders, managing director of GlobalData, said in an emailed statement that Foot Locker, which has a 4.3% share of the sporting goods market, would give an immediate boost to Dick's.

"It would also give Dick's substantially more bargaining power with national brands, especially in the sneaker space," he added.

Foot Locker shareholders can choose to receive either \$24 in cash or 0.1168 shares of Dick's common stock for each Foot Locker share that they own.

Dick's said that it anticipates closing on the Foot Locker deal in the second half of the year. The transaction still needs approval from Foot Locker shareholders.

Dick's stock dropped more than 10% before the market open, while shares of Foot Locker surged more than 82%. □

## Coinbase said cyber crooks stole customer information and demanded \$20 million ransom payment

By **ALAN SUDERMAN**  
AP Business Writer

Coinbase, the largest cryptocurrency exchange

based in the U.S., said Thursday that criminals had improperly obtained personal data on the ex-

change's customers for use in crypto-stealing scams and were demanding a \$20 million payment not to publicly release the info.

Coinbase CEO Brian Armstrong said in a social media post that criminals had bribed some of the company's customer service agents who live outside the U.S. to hand over personal data on customers, like names, dates of birth and partial social security numbers.

"(The stolen data) allows them to conduct social engineering attacks where they can call our customers impersonating

Coinbase customer support and try to trick them into sending their funds to the attackers," Armstrong said.

Social engineering is a popular hacking strategy, as humans tend to be the weakest link in any network. Many large companies have suffered hacks and data breaches as a result of such scams in recent years.

Coinbase did not specify how many customers had their data stolen or fell prey to social engineering scams.

But the company did pledge to reimburse any who did.

Coinbase shares fell 6% in trading around midday. The shares are still up about 22% this month due to gains in bitcoin and other cryptocurrencies.

In a filing with the Securities and Exchange Commission, Coinbase estimated that it would have to spend between \$180 million to \$400 million "relating to remediation costs and voluntary customer reimbursements relating to this incident."

The SEC filing said that the company had, "in previous months," detected some of its customer service agents "accessing data without business need." □



The Coinbase logo covers the Nasdaq MarketSite in New York's Times Square, April 14, 2021.

Associated Press



# Mud balls! Schauffele and Scheffler have rounds muddied by double bogeys at PGA Championship

By DOUG FERGUSON

AP Golf Writer

CHARLOTTE, N.C. (AP) —

The PGA Championship put the top three players in the world together for the first time in three years on Thursday and the conversation turned to mud.

Scottie Scheffler and Xander Schauffele each had clumps of mud on their golf balls from the middle of the 16th fairway — the hardest hole at Quail Hollow — and saw their shots curve hard to the left, over the green and into the water, leading to double bogeys.

It was like that for most of the day, the product on a course that has been soaked by heavy showers in the three days leading up to the second major of the year, and more rain from late last week.

The PGA of America put out a notice on the eve of the first round saying that the ball would be played as it lies because the turf was “outstanding and drying by the hour.”

“We are looking forward to an exciting opening round,” the statement said. Maybe just not this variety. “It’s frustrating to hit the ball



Rory McIlroy, of Northern Ireland, reacts after missing a putt on the 16th hole during the first round of the PGA Championship golf tournament at the Quail Hollow Club, Thursday, May 15, 2025, in Charlotte, N.C.

in the middle of the fairway and get mud on it and have no idea where it’s going to go,” said Scheffler, the No. 1 player in golf the last two years. “I understand it’s part of the game, but there’s nothing more frustrating for a player. You spend your whole life trying to learn how to control a golf ball, and due to a rules decision all of a sud-

den you have absolutely no control over where that golf ball goes.

“But I don’t make the rules,” he said. “I just have to deal with the consequences.” He managed a 2-under 69, helped by twice holing shots from off the green a chip-in from deep rough behind the 12th green (after another mud ball from the fairway), and putting

in from just off the green at the par-5 15th for eagle.

And then came the double bogey by each player in the marquee group on the 16th.

“I did a good job of battling back today and not letting a bad break like that which cost me a couple shots get to me,” Scheffler said.

“Did a good job battling after that and posting a de-

cent score.”

Schauffele, the No. 3 player in the world and defending PGA champion, opened with a 1-over 72 and was leaning back in a leather chair in the locker room when he looked up and saw television replaying his shot on the 16th.

He was aiming beyond the bunker right of the green and figures he probably should have been aiming toward where the gallery was watching.

“A lot of guys are dealing with it, but it’s just unfortunate to be hitting good shots and to pay them off that way. It’s kind of stupid,” he said.

McIlroy shot 74 and the Masters champion declined to speak to the media. He might not have been a good authority on mud balls because McIlroy was rarely in the fairway, hitting only four of them for the round.

He also made double bogey on the 16th because of a different kind of conditions. McIlroy hit so far left that he was beyond the fairway down a grassy hill, the golf ball well above his shoes. □

Associated Press

# Massive crash neutralizes Giro stage 6. Groves sprints to victory, Pedersen stays in pink

NAPLES, Italy (AP) — Australian cyclist Kaden Groves sprinted to victory in a chaotic sixth stage of the Giro d’Italia that had been neutralized following a massive crash on Thursday.

When 2022 winner Jai Hindley slid on the wet roads, riders toppled in domino style with about 70 kilometers (43 miles) left on the 227-kilometer (141-mile) route from Potenza to Naples.

Hindley was taken to hospital with reported concussion and other riders also had to abandon the three-week race.

With all of the ambulances in use, the stage was neutralized for safety reasons while it was discussed how best to continue.

Two breakaway riders and the peloton were brought to a halt. The race resumed with about 60 kilometers remaining and the decision that only the stage win would count and no points, time gaps or bonuses would be awarded.

That option allowed Naples to get its stage finish and the sprinters could vie for a prestigious win but the overall contenders could remain as safe as possible. Overall leader Mads Pedersen, who won three of the opening five stages, preserved his 17-second advantage over pre-race favorite Primož Roglič, and Mathias Vacek was another seven seconds back. Groves beat Milan Fretin in a much-reduced bunch

sprint to the finish line after the longest stage of this Giro, with Paul Magnier third.

It was Groves’ first win of the year after a knee injury sidelined the Alpecin-Deceuninck rider for several races.

“The team always believes in me,” he said. “With the injury I missed a lot of racing and I was arriving here without a win, so the first one for the year is a big relief.

“Once it started raining, I felt quite a bit better, actually.

I’m quite good in the colder weather conditions. I had confidence in my team also, I believe in them, and they always do a super job.”

Friday’s seventh stage sees the first summit finish in the hardest leg so far. There are four classified climbs on the 168-kilometer route from

Castel di Sangro, including the top category ascent to the finish in Tagliacozzo.

The Giro ends in Rome on June 1. □



Denmark’s Mads Pedersen reacts after the sixth stage of the Giro d’Italia cycling race was neutralised following a huge crash, Thursday, May 15, 2025.

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## WNBA set to tipoff season with host of teams looking to challenge for title including Clark's Fever

By **DOUG FEINBERG**  
AP Basketball Writer

There are no shortages of challengers to the reigning WNBA champion New York Liberty or star power across the league.

A'ja Wilson, Breanna Stewart and Napheesa Collier are some of the veterans who will share the spotlight with Caitlin Clark, Angel Reese and Paige Bueckers as the league, in its 29th season, hopes to continue its rise in popularity.

The WNBA season tips off Friday with expansion team Golden State playing its first game that night. A day later the Liberty will host the Aces where New York will receive its rings and raise the first championship banner in the franchise's history. Later that day, Clark and Reese will meet for the first of five matchups this season between Indiana and Chicago. Both are looking to build off their stellar



Indiana Fever guard Caitlin Clark, center, walks off the court after an exhibition women's basketball game against Brazil, Sunday, May 4, 2025, in Iowa City, Iowa.

Associated Press

rookie seasons where they set records and helped the league to record ratings and attendance. No team made more

moves this offseason than the Fever, who brought in a lot of talented veterans around Clark and Aliyah Boston the last two WNBA

Rookie of the Year award winners. Indiana added DeWanna Bonner, Natasha Howard and Sophie Cunningham as well as re-sign-

ing Kelsey Mitchell.

Clark is a slight favorite over Wilson and Collier according to BetMGM to win the MVP. The Fever are one of the betting favorites to win the title.

Indiana is not the only team to make major moves with several franchises adding marquee names to rosters during the offseason via free agency and trades.

Atlanta picked up former Mercury All-Star Brittney Griner, who had spent her entire WNBA career playing in Arizona since being drafted No. 1 in 2013 by Phoenix. The Dream also added former Connecticut standout Brionna Jones.

Phoenix was active in bolstering its roster, trading for Alyssa Thomas and signing Satou Sabally.

The Sun lost their entire starting five from last season and brought back former UConn All-American Tina Charles. □